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AUTHOR Rigler, Sharon E.
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ABSTRACT

This study investigated gender differences in beginning high school English teachers' views of mentors' roles and positive mentor-mentee interactions. Using phenomenological analysis, the researcher interviewed male and female beginning teachers in public and private schools. Respondents identified good and bad mentors. Their significant statements were organized into clusters of common themes, and from these clusters, exhaustive descriptions of the phenomenon were produced. Male teachers used direct metaphors to explain their expectations of what mentors should be, while female teachers' metaphors were implied rather than explicit. Though males' and females' comments reflected similarities in their expectations of mentors and mentor-mentee relationships, some gender differences emerged. Both groups believed mentors should be emotionally available and experienced teachers. Males felt mentors should be friends and confidantes and enjoy mentoring. Females felt mentors should coach or give advice. Males' metaphors revealed a mentor-mentee relationship that was similar to the relationship between therapists and clients or parents and children. Females perceived the relationship as similar to the practical relationship between a coach and athlete or advisor and advisee. Three appendixes include: tables of significant statements; tables of clusters of common themes; and tables of textual, structural, and exhaustive descriptions. (Contains 12 references.) (SM)

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Gender Differences in Beginning Teachers' Metaphors for Mentoring

A Study
by

Sharon E. Rigler
The University of Georgia

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Gender Differences in Beginning Teachers' Metaphors for Mentoring

This study was designed to investigate gender differences in beginning high school English teachers' views of the role of mentors and positive mentor-mentee interactions. The qualitative phenomenological research method was used, which involved analyzing recorded and transcribed interviews with four participants--two first-year English teachers in a public high school (one male and one female), a second-year English teacher in a private high school (male), and a third-year English teacher in a public school (female). Outlined are common themes reflecting their perceptions of what a mentor is and does. Results indicate that males use therapist/parent metaphors, and females use coach/advisor metaphors.

Introduction

Mentoring originated in classical Greek mythology with the relationship between Mentor and Telemachus in Homer's epic poem *The Odyssey*. Today, in general, the term mentor refers to an expert, advisor, helper, or sponsor in any particular field who offers insight and guidance to his or her protégé (Odell, 1990). In education, mentoring occurs at many levels: an educator may be a mentor to a student, a preservice teacher, or a beginning teacher. For the purposes of this study, mentoring will refer to the pairing of a master teacher (the mentor) with a beginning teacher (the mentee) to provide assistance and support especially during the induction years (the first three years of teaching).

Mentoring currently plays an important role in the professional development of newly qualified teachers. Even the most effective pre-service programs cannot fully prepare teachers for their first assignments. Although beginning teachers may be well prepared in content and theory, they still have much to learn about teaching--about putting their knowledge to work and about the lifelong process of developing as a teacher (Odell, 1990). In addition, novices encountering the "realities" of beginning teaching (Lortie, 1975) need supervision, feedback, and support from mentor teachers within their specific schools. Beginning teachers must be encouraged and nurtured during their induction period (when they are the most vulnerable) so that they do not revert

to less effective teaching methodologies and so that they do not become so discouraged and frustrated that they choose to leave the profession.

My experience with mentoring began at a metro-Atlanta high school where I taught English for thirteen years. Over the years I witnessed a number of beginning teachers encounter the realities Lortie mentions. When the county established a mentor program, I volunteered and participated in a two-week staff development training session. At no time during this mentor training program were beginning teachers consulted about their views on mentoring. I feel that those who designed the training sessions failed to recognize the most valuable resource--the beginning teachers themselves. Their input would have helped me understand the difficulties they were experiencing so that I could have addressed their concerns more effectively. Instead, although I had been "trained" as a mentor and was considered a master teacher, I often felt unequipped to provide the beginning teachers the important assistance they needed during their induction years.

One problem with mentoring programs is that most operate under two erroneous assumptions: 1) those who volunteer or are chosen to be mentor teachers possess desired qualities or have mastered outlined competencies, and, therefore, are effective mentors; and 2) the qualities and skills listed in research are, in fact, the important ones for mentors to possess. Another problem is that most research investigating perspectives on mentoring examines mentoring from the mentor teacher's perspective. Very little has been written about the beginning teacher's perspective of the role of mentors.

In early 1998, I conducted a phenomenological pilot study with male participants to describe mentoring from the beginning high school English teacher's perspective and to investigate the following research questions: 1) What do beginning high school English teachers perceive as the role of mentors (assuming that they are familiar with that role)? and 2) From the perspective of the beginning high school English teacher, what is the essential structure of a

positive mentor-mentee interaction (assuming that there is one and assuming that the beginning teacher has a perspective on it)?

For this new project, I conducted a similar pilot study, this time with female participants, to describe their views and to investigate the following research questions: 1) How do participants' metaphors reveal their perspectives on mentoring? and 2) Do the female participants' metaphors differ from those used by the male participants who have responded to the same questions? My hypotheses are that the participants' metaphors will reveal insights into their perspectives on mentoring and that the female participants' metaphors will differ from those used by the male participants interviewed in the previous pilot study.

The Use of Metaphors

Examining participants' metaphors often reveals insights into their perspectives about abstract concepts. In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson write: "Because so many of the concepts that are important to us are either abstract or not clearly delineated in our experience (the emotions, ideas, time, etc.), we need to get a grasp on them by means of other concepts that we understand in clearer terms" (p. 115). Because qualitative research writing rests both on how we make meaning and how we communicate our understandings it is essential to consider how metaphors may illuminate and illustrate meaning. According to Ely et al (1997), ". . . if we think of how we illuminate an idea or object by describing it, then metaphor can be understood as a way to provide *illustration* of that illumination through its comparative qualities. Metaphor is a tool that can move us away from predictable lines of seeing" (p. 112, emphasis in original).

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) note that surfacing the metaphors we use can be a way of understanding a situation we might not fully grasp in other ways. They write:

> Metaphor is one of our most important tools for trying to comprehend partially what cannot be comprehended totally.

> our feelings, aesthetic experiences, moral practices, and spiritual awareness. These endeavors of the imagination are not devoid of rationality: Since they employ metaphor, they employ an imaginative rationality. (p. 193)

Ely et al (1997) add that "Metaphor offers a structure that aids us in establishing a relationship between something that we already know and something else that we are attempting to understand. . . . metaphor can help us see what is *not* there, what is missing and then. . .what might be needed" (pp. 113-114, emphasis in original). Cormac (1985) writes that "metaphors mediate between culture and the mind" and that "the meaning of metaphors results from the semantical aspects of communication, the context in cultural settings, and the creation of new concepts" (p. 227).

In addition, examining the differences in male and female participants' use of metaphors is important to describe the distinctions between their perceptions of and perspectives toward abstract concepts. Mills (1998) writes: "A number of feminist theorists have suggested that the use of metaphor is crucial to describing the distinction between women's and men's writing." (p. 74). Kaplan (1998) extends this theory to include distinctions in speech as well as writing. She asserts:

> Symbolic language, which includes everyday speech as well as written or imaginative forms, uses two basic tropes, metaphor and metonymy. . . . While metaphor and metonymy are the stuff of poetry, these linguistic tropes are the modes through which we come to perceive all relations of difference, such as gender difference and the separation of self from others." (p. 57).

Supporting Coates's statement that ". . . language and gender are inextricably linked" (1993, p. 204), Kaplan adds: "How men and women come to speak at all, how they see each other through speech. . .all these relations bear upon the way in which individual poets are seen to 'create' new symbolic identifications and relations" (p. 57).

Methodology

Design

Because there are few studies in the literature providing a "voice" for the beginning teacher about mentoring, a qualitative phenomenological study devoted to understanding the beginning teacher's perspective of mentoring was appropriate for examining this question. Phenomenology as a qualitative design is used to describe the essence of a central phenomenon (experience, topic, or concept) (Moustakas, 1994). In this case, the phenomenon to be described is the concept of mentoring from the beginning high school English teacher's perspective. From a constructivist perspective, reality is contextual and socially constructed (Creswell, 1998). A mentor's description of mentoring (as discussed in the literature) is his or her reality, whereas the beginning teacher's description of mentoring may reflect another reality. It is desirable to study mentoring from a phenomenological perspective in order to analyze the role of the mentor and the essential structure of a positive mentor-mentee interaction from the beginning teacher's perspective.

Phenomenological analysis requires the researcher to state his or her assumptions about the phenomenon under investigation and then bracket or suspend these preconceptions to understand fully the experience of the participant and resist imposing an a priori hypothesis on the experience. Although I served as a mentor and, of course, was at one time a beginning high school English teacher, I assume that: 1) no two perspectives are exactly alike; 2) the perspective of a beginning teacher may differ from that of a mentor teacher; and 3) the perspective of a beginning high school English teacher today may differ from that of a beginning high school English teacher many years ago. I further assume that there is a description of the role of a mentor and an essential structure of a positive (or negative) mentor-mentee interaction that can be extracted from the beginning high school English teachers' descriptions of these concepts.

Data Collection

The combined number of participants in the two studies was limited to four because of the time constraints of this study. Using a criterion-based selection method (Creswell, 1998), the participants were selected according to the following criteria: 1) The participant is in his or her first three years of teaching (a beginning teacher); and 2) The participant is a high school English teacher. Participants were asked if they would like to participate in a research project involving the tape recording of an interview on the concept of mentoring. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained, access to their schools was permitted, and written consent forms were signed and retained on file by both participants and researcher. The participants were interviewed at their schools and are described below:

John is a 30-year-old single Caucasian male with a Master's Degrees in Divinity and English Education. He is a high school English teacher in a private school and is in his second year.

Jeff is a 28-year old married Caucasian male with a Master's Degree in English. He is a high school English teacher in a public high school and is in his first year.

Emily is a 25-year-old married Caucasian female with a Bachelor's Degree in English Education. She has been teaching high school English for three years but is in her first year at a public high school.

Jennifer is a 22-year old single Caucasian female with a Bachelor's Degree in English Education. She is a high school English teacher in a public high school and is in her first year.

One semi-structured, in-depth, face-to-face interview was conducted with each participant. All participants were provided with the following information:

> This interview is confidential and voluntary. Please answer the following questions in as much detail as you would like. You are not obligated to answer any questions with which you are uncomfortable, and you may ask that I discontinue the

interview or recording at any time. Please keep in mind that you are not being asked to assess or evaluate your present /past mentor (if you have/had one) in any way. The purpose of the interview is for me to gain a better understanding of the essence of mentoring from the beginning teacher's perspective.

The length of the interviews varied from 30 to 45 minutes. The raw data as recorded were transcribed verbatim for each participant.

Data Analysis

These transcriptions were subjected to phenomenological analysis (Moustakas, 1994). The procedural steps used were as follows:

1. All participants' interview transcriptions were read several times to become familiar with them.

2. The transcriptions were open-coded, extracting phrases and sentences that directly pertained to the research questions.

3. Each significant statement was listed and treated as having equal worth. This process is called horizonalization (Creswell, 1998). These lists are presented in Tables 1 - 8 in Appendix A. Overlapping and repetitive statements were removed.

4. The remaining statements were then formulated into meaning statements and clustered into common themes.

5. From these first four steps, a textual description was written of *what* was perceived (a description of mentors from the beginning high school English teacher's perspective).

6. Next a structural description was written of *how* mentoring was experienced (a description of the essential structure of a positive mentor/mentee interaction).

7. Finally, an overall description of the essence of mentoring was developed.

Rigor

This study includes detailed descriptions of its design, research process, procedures, and findings. First, a literature review provides modal comparison. Then, each of the steps in the research process is outlined, providing both an audit trail and a means by which the study can be replicated or continued. The analysis of the data is interpretive and detailed, supported with specific quotes. In addition, all parts of the research process underwent peer review.

The study began with statements of the researcher's prior experience about the topic being examined and carefully addressed the researcher's theoretical framework and personal assumptions. The four participants involved were from very different schools--one private and one public school with predominantly white middle-class students and two public schools with predominantly African-American working class students. The most important validating step was achieved by returning to these participants and asking if the descriptions formulated validated their original perspectives of the essence of mentoring.

Findings

As stated, the purpose of the pilot studies was to describe mentoring from the beginning high school English teacher's perspective, and to investigate two research questions: 1) What do beginning high school English teachers perceive as the role of mentors? and 2) From the perspective of the high school English teacher, what is the essential structure of a positive mentor-mentee interaction? During the phenomenological analysis, it became apparent that the participants' significant statements first described their perceptions of the qualities and characteristics of both "good" and "bad" mentors. The beginning teachers' perceptions of the role of mentors were included in their descriptions of the positive and negative mentor-mentee interactions. Participants' significant statements are indicated in Tables 1-8 in Appendix A.

It also became apparent during the phenomenological analysis that the participants' significant statements could be organized into clusters of themes. The clusters represent themes that have emerged from and are common to the participants' descriptions. These clusters were referred back to the original descriptions in order to validate them. Each description was examined to see if there was anything in the original that was not accounted for in the cluster of themes, and whether the cluster proposed something that was not original. These clusters are presented in Tables 9 - 12 in Appendix B.

After examining these clusters of themes, exhaustive descriptions of the phenomenon were produced by the integration of the results of the analysis. A textual description of a "good" mentor describes what the phenomenon is, a structural description of the phenomenon describes the essential structure of a positive mentor-mentee interaction, and an exhaustive description of mentoring captures the phenomenon's essence. These three descriptions are presented in Tables 13 - 18 in Appendix C. The findings remained as faithful as possible to the participants' original descriptions, and were allowed to emerge from the data, rather than from predetermined definitions or external criteria. A final validation was undertaken by returning to the participants and asking them if the descriptions formulated validated their originally described perceptions. All participants stated that the descriptions they read of a "good" mentor, of a positive mentor-mentee interaction, and of mentoring contained the essence of their perceptions of the phenomena.

The two male participants used direct metaphors to explain their expectations of what a mentor should be. John stated that a mentor should ". . . sometimes be the understanding, therapist kind of person. . . ." John states that a mentor should ". . . let you figure things out for yourself. . . let you explore by yourself, maybe you need to be struggling with some issue for awhile." He goes on to say:

> A lot of times like when the grief process happens [to] somebody, like even if a death happens [to] somebody close to you, it's going

> to take you at least a year to grieve through the stages, and you know, you got all these people: well this is how you should feel, or you'll get over it, or it'll be better. That's cheap. You gotta understand this first few years of teaching or whatever is a process, and I don't know if anybody's ever nailed down any kind of stages of it and all, but I'd be interested to see. It's understanding people go through these stages--you have to go through each stage completely and thoroughly, experientially. It's not a quick thing; it's not going to circumvent each stage. You might come in here with the whole first year of lesson plans already manufactured and planned out, but you're still going to have to suffer down the line through the trials and tribulations.

John indicates that one of the difficult things for mentors is ". . .taking yourself out of your present situation, walking with that person through that first year." He states that one of his needs as a beginning teacher was ". . . freedom to be able to discuss my ideas. . ."

Jeff describes a mentor as ". . . someone who does a lot of the same things that a parent does, but on a different level. So instead of care and feeding of a small child, it's kind of care and feeding of an adult. . ." He also sees a mentor as ". . . something that's necessary in a man's life for him to develop. . . to try to bring them [mentees] from early adulthood to mature adulthood." When asked who shouldn't be a mentor, Jeff stated, "someone who doesn't have the patience to understand that role" or someone who is "trying to be something you're not." He adds that mentors "have always been available for questions and have always helped me out when I needed it. . . "

On the other hand, the female participants' metaphors were implied rather than explicitly stated. Jennifer describes a mentor as someone "to coach you through this thing when necessary. . ." and to "make themselves available for criticism and encouragement. . . to give you feedback on what they've seen you do. . . " She found that mentors were important "as a sounding board, as a

source for ideas" and as "somebody who would come check on you" and someone who is "always making you realize the things that you haven't thought of because of your lack of experience. . ."

Emily describes a mentor as "an experienced teacher . . . who kind of takes another teacher under her wing and . . . gives her advice. . . about different situations, tells me the advantages and disadvantages of certain things." When asked why mentors are important, Emily replied that they were needed for "guidance" and to "give advice in certain situations, make sure that his or her person he's caring for is aware of certain things that he or she should be doing." She says that mentors should "correct as appropriately as they can anything they see that the teacher's doing wrong. . . " In addition, mentors should be make sure "they're following up and not just letting somebody kind of go through the cracks. . ." Mentors should also be "really clear and specific [about] what works and what doesn't work. . ." and to be "really specific, as detailed as you can, and not being harsh, not looking down on someone because they're not getting it maybe as quickly as they should. . ."

These participants' use of metaphors lends insight into their perceptions of mentors. Although the males' and females' comments reflected many similarities in their expectations of mentors and mentor-mentee interactions, some gender differences emerged. Both groups indicated that mentors should be emotionally available and an experienced practitioner, but the male participants extended their expectations of the mentor to include someone who is a friend and confidante and someone who enjoys being a mentor. In addition, to expressing these views, the male participants used the direct metaphors of "therapist" and "parent." The female participants, on the other hand, did not use direct metaphors, but implied through verbs that they conceptualized a mentor as someone who "coaches" or "gives advice."

The male participants describe their therapist/parent mentor positively: understanding, empathetic, sympathetic, caring, nurturing, interested, confident, well-versed in theory, well-grounded, truthful, trustworthy, non-judgmental,

comfortable, energetic, and original. The only negative characteristics they attribute to bad mentors are lacking professional respect, unsupportive, impatient, and cynical. In contrast, the female participants used fewer positive descriptors of good coach/advisor mentors and a greater number of descriptors to identify negative characteristics of emotionally unavailable mentors. Good mentors, they indicated, are involved, supportive, caring, knowledgeable, professional, and helpful. However, negative characteristics include: inexperienced, unhappy, disillusioned, assuming, abrupt, mean, harsh, uncaring, uninterested, discouraging, and intolerable.

When describing positive mentor-mentee interactions, all participants agreed that mentors need to listen, promote professional development, and provide helpful suggestions. The males, in keeping with their therapist/parent metaphors, also placed emphasis on needing mentor to help orient their thinking. They mentioned needing mentors to provide conceptual, analytical ways of understanding problems, suggesting thought-out ways of philosophically dealing with issues, and giving long-term perspectives. The females participants, on the other hand, in keeping with their implied coach/advisor metaphors, described mentors who were more practical and less philosophical in their approaches. They indicated that mentors should actively maintain the mentor-mentee relationship. Mentors should make time for mentees, take them under their wings, keep track of mentees, make sure mentees are okay, follow up, get mentees involved, ask questions, and correct appropriately and positively.

The females participants' emphasis on the practical nature of mentoring can also be seen in their descriptors of how mentors promote professional development. They describe mentors as telling the advantages and disadvantages of certain things, making the mentee aware of what he or she should be doing, letting mentees know about school rules and regulations, and making mentees realize the things they haven't thought of. The male participants describe mentors' promotion of professional development differently.

They indicated that mentors should walk with mentees, but let beginning teachers figure things out, explore, and struggle with issues.

Overall, it seems that these male participants' metaphors reveal a perception of a mentor-mentee relationship that is similar to the relationships between therapists and clients or between parents and children. The mentor (therapist/parent) extracts him or herself from the situation, listens carefully to the mentee's (client/child's) frustration, sadness, or problem. The mentor refrains from advising too quickly, rather s/he helps the mentee examine the situation from alternative perspectives and provides information regarding possible problem-solving strategies either from personal experience or from the successes of others. S/he then encourages the mentee to draw his or her own conclusions and make the appropriate decisions.

The female participants used different metaphors to express their perspectives on the mentor-mentee relationship. They perceive the structure of a positive mentor-mentee interaction as similar to the practical relationship between a coach and athlete or advisor and advisee. This process involves the mentors (coaches/advisors) making time for mentees (athletes/advisees), taking them under their wings, keeping track of them, listening to concerns or complaints, asking questions, offering feedback, providing ideas and helpful suggestions, and generally helping out by guiding them through their first years as beginning teachers.

Discussion, Summary, and Recommendations

The findings of this phenomenological study provide the beginning teacher's "voice" that is missing from existing literature on mentoring. As indicated earlier, the existing literature is presented from the perspective of mentors themselves and primarily focuses on describing qualities and competencies that practicing mentors perceive themselves as having (Ireton and Wilson, 1995/96; Vonk, 1996). However, the participants in this study, all of

whom are beginning teachers, perceived the description of mentoring to include not only what the mentor *does* in the way of interaction, but what the mentor *is*.

These findings raise issues for consideration in the areas of mentor training, research on mentoring, and mentoring practices. With some understanding of how beginning high school English teachers, both male and female, perceive mentors, those designing and conducting mentor training programs could introduce training sessions that foster sensitivity to gender issues and focus on those characteristics identified by beginning English teachers as descriptive of "good" mentors and positive mentor-mentee interactions. The findings of this study also demonstrate that data about mentoring can be gathered directly from beginning teachers. In addition, mentors may change their mentoring practices by approaching mentoring from a different perspective. By understanding that male and female beginning teachers' perceptions may differ, mentors can begin to realize that the best source of information about the mentoring is the mentee.

Since my area of interest is Secondary English Education, I selected four participants who were beginning high school English teachers. In a continuation of the study I would involve as many participants as necessary to gain new information. I would also ask some questions in the interviews regarding whether they perceived the role of mentors to differ across subject areas or across school cultures. To investigate these questions further studies might include participants from multiple disciplines. In addition, although this study included participants from four different schools, interviews conducted in many more locations might provide insight into the needs of specific types of schools or communities. Also, participants representing elementary and middle schools may have different perspectives on the role of mentors.

Clearly, mentors can be of great benefit to beginning teachers during their induction years, but how do beginning teachers perceive mentoring? Do male and female beginning teachers perceive mentoring differently? Traditional research investigates preconceived notions about what mentoring is and what

qualities mentors should possess. This study presents a fresh perspective, and the most important perspective--the perspective of those for whom mentoring is designed--the beginning teachers.

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Appendix A:

Tables 1- 8

Significant Statements

Table 1 Significant Statements Description of Mentor-- Positive (Males)

1. friend
2. confidante
3. understanding
4. someone who will tell you the truth
5. practitioner
6. therapist kind of person
7. confident
8. empathetic
9. sympathetic
10. somebody that you can trust
11. well-versed in different theories
12. non-judgmental
13. somebody who enjoys it
14. anybody that's been doing whatever it is they're mentoring for a long time
15. something that's necessary in a man's life for him to develop
16. someone who does a lot of the same things that a parent does
17. someone who's really in their career exactly where they need to be
18. role model
19. comfortable in role model role
20. caring
21. original
22. interested
23. energetic
24. well-grounded
25. available for questions

Table 2 Significant Statements Description of Mentor-- Positive (Females)

1. experienced
2. understands responsibilities
3. guide
4. involved in mentee's life
5. professional
6. supportive
7. caring
8. helpful
9. direct
10. clear
11. specific
12. knows when it's appropriate to talk about a situation and when it's no
13. someone who is there to listen to mentee's concerns
14. someone who wants to be a mentor
15. sounding board
16. available to listen to complaints
17. source for ideas
18. resource

Table 3 Significant Statements Description of Mentor-- Negative (Males)

1. should not be the principal
2. should not be the superintendent
3. should not be your department head
4. should not be a person who already has a lot of duties
5. lack of professional respect
6. lack of support
7. lack of unity
8. someone who doesn't have the patience
9. someone who's not well-suited
10. cynicism

Table 4 Significant Statements Description of Mentor-- Negative (Females)

1. inexperienced
2. not even happy being a teacher
3. disillusioned with his or her school or profession
4. too involved
5. assumes too much
6. abrupt, mean, harsh
7. doesn't care about mentee's struggles
8. not interested in listening
9. discouraging
10. intolerable of errors
11. somebody who's going to use mentee to make him/herself feel better

Table 5 Significant Statements
Positive Interaction (Males)

1. asks you what you need
2. lets you figure things out for yourself
3. give you guidance
4. lets you explore by yourself
5. lets you struggle with issues
6. lets go through stages completely
7. helps colleagues
8. walks with that person
9. identifies with feelings
10. provides adult conversation
11. provides damage control
12. gives me a conceptual, analytical way of understanding problems
13. gives thought out, way of philosophically dealing with issue
14. provides place to use own ideas
15. provides information about what other teachers are doing
16. hears frustration and sadness
17. gives you long term perspective
18. helps you see what the good things are
19. encourages
20. extracts self from political situation
21. tells about their own experiences
22. brings them from early adulthood to mature adulthood
23. gives you somewhere to look
24. makes suggestions
25. helps me out when I need it

Table 6 Significant Statements
Positive Interaction
(Females)

1. takes mentee under wing
2. gives advice
3. tells advantages and disadvantages of certain things
4. makes sure mentee is aware of what he or she should be doing
5. corrects as appropriately as possible
6. keeps track of mentee
7. makes sure mentee is okay
8. follows up
9. gets mentee involved
10. asks questions
11. listens
12. lets mentee know about rules and regulations
13. pays close attention
14. helps out
15. corrects in a direct, positive manner
16. gives specific details on what to do
17. coaches you through this
18. allows you to vent
19. wows you with great ideas
20. makes themselves available for criticism and encouragement
21. gives you feedback
22. makes time
23. helps remedy difficult situations
24. checks on you more than you go to them
25. reminds you to document
26. always makes you realize the things you haven't thought of

Table 7 Significant Statements Negative Interaction (Males)

1. tells you what you ought to be doing
2. cuts short your growth
3. giving rational advice without identifying feelings
4. talking about somebody
5. fussing about the latest thing
6. hanging on to some stereotype
7. undermining me with my students
8. bringing in your mentoree into take side issues
9. tries to control where that person is
10. complaining about so-and-so
11. teaming up against somebody
12. uses the mentee as a way to advance themselves
13. trying to be something you're not
14. blowing off the supervision

Table 8 Significant Statements Negative Interaction (Females)

1. chastises or scolds
2. lets somebody go through the cracks
3. looks down on someone because they're not getting it as quickly as they should
4. tells mentee that what he or she did was stupid
5. solves problems for them

Appendix B:

Tables 9 - 12

Clusters of Common Themes

Table 9 Clusters of Common Themes: Description of Mentor (Males)

Positive:

1. The mentor is emotionally available: understanding, empathetic, sympathetic, caring, nurturing, interested.
2. The mentor is an experienced practitioner: confident, well-versed in theory, well-grounded, role model.
3. The mentor is a friend and confidante: truthful, trustworthy, non-judgmental.
4. The mentor enjoys being a mentor: comfortable, energetic, original.

Negative:

5. The mentor is emotionally unavailable: has too many duties, lacks professional respect, is not supportive, is impatient and cynical.

Table 10 Clusters of Common Themes: Description of Mentor (Females)

Positive:

1. The mentor is emotionally available: involved, supportive, caring.
2. The mentor is an experienced practitioner: knowledgeable, professional, helpful, direct, clear, specific.

Negative:

5. The mentor is emotionally unavailable: inexperienced, unhappy, disillusioned, assuming, abrupt, mean, harsh, uncaring, uninterested, discouraging, intolerable.

Table 11 Clusters of Common Themes: Mentor-Mentee Interaction (Males)

Positive:

1. The mentor listens: identifies with feelings, hears frustrations and sadness.
2. The mentor helps the beginning teacher orient his or her thinking: provides a conceptual, analytical way of understanding problems; suggests thought-out ways of philosophically dealing with issues; gives long-term perspective; helps mentee see what the good thing are.
3. The mentor promotes personal and professional development: lets beginning teacher figure things out, explore, struggle with issues; walks with that person.
4. The mentor provides helpful suggestions: gives guidance, suggests damage control strategies, provides information about what other teachers are doing, tells about their own experiences, gives mentee somewhere to look, makes suggestions, helps, encourages.

Negative:

5. The mentor advises too quickly: tells the beginning teacher what to do, provides rational advice without identifying with beginning teacher's feelings, cuts short growth.
6. The mentor has a hidden agenda: brings mentee into take side issues, tries to control where that person is, uses mentee as a way to advance him or herself, wishes to team up against somebody.
7. The conversation is not constructive: talking about some-body, fussing about the latest thing, complaining about so-and-so.

Table 12 Clusters of Common Themes: Mentor-Mentee Interaction (Females)

Positive:

1. The mentor listens: hears concerns, sighs, complaints; pays close attention.
2. The mentor maintains the mentor-mentee relationship: takes mentee under wing, keeps track of mentee, makes sure mentee is okay, follows up, doesn't let mentee "fall through the cracks," gets mentee involved, asks questions, corrects appropriately and positively, makes time.
3. The mentor promotes professional development: tells advantages and disadvantages of certain things, makes mentee aware of what he or she should be doing, lets mentee know about school rules and regulations, reminds mentee to document, makes mentee realize the things he or she hasn't thought of.
4. The mentor provides helpful suggestions: gives advice, guides, helps out, coaches, provides specific details on what to do, wows mentee with great ideas, gives feedback, helps remedy difficult situations.

Negative:

5. The mentor advises too quickly: solves problem for mentee.
6. The conversation is not constructive: chastises or scolds excessively, looks down on mentee, makes mentee feel stupid.

Appendix C:

Tables 13 - 18

Textual, Structural, and Exhaustive Descriptions

Table 13 Textual Description of Mentor (Males)

Beginning high school English teachers perceive good mentors as experienced practitioners who willingly listen to, identify with, and understand the frustrations and struggles experienced during the first years of teaching. According to the beginning teacher, good mentors are empathetic, caring, honest, trustworthy, non-judgmental, encouraging, and available for emotional support and professional guidance. They are comfortable being a role model and enjoy being a mentor.

Table 14 Textual Description of Mentor (Females)

Beginning high school English teachers perceive good mentors as experienced practitioners who are knowledgeable, professional, and helpful. According to the beginning teacher, good mentors are involved, supportive, and caring.

Table 15 Structural Description of a Positive Mentor-Mentee Interaction (Males)

Beginning high school English teachers perceive the structure of a positive mentor-mentee interaction as similar to the structure of a positive therapist-client or positive parent-child interaction. The mentor (therapist/parent) extracts him or herself from the situation, listens carefully to the mentee's (client/child's) frustration, sadness, or problem. The mentor refrains from advising too quickly, rather s/he helps the mentee examine the situation from alternative perspectives and provides information regarding possible problem-solving strategies either from personal experience or from the successes of others. S/he then encourages the mentee to draw his or her own conclusions and make the appropriate decisions.

Table 16 Structural Description of a Positive Mentor-Mentee Interaction (Females)

Beginning high school English teachers perceive the structure of a positive mentor-mentee interaction as an ongoing process. This process involves the mentors making time for mentoring, taking mentees under their wings, keeping track of mentees, willingly listening to concerns or complaints, asking questions, offering feedback, advising mentees about school policies and procedures, providing ideas and helpful suggestions, and generally helping out by guiding and coaching mentees through their first few years as beginning teachers.

Table 17 Exhaustive Description of the Essence of Mentoring (Males)

Beginning high school English teachers perceive the essence of mentoring to be an active process of the mentor listening to, understanding, and encouraging the beginning teacher, allowing him or her to learn and develop. Mentoring means being available during the mentee's first years to provide emotional support, honest perspective, and professional guidance.

Table 18 Exhaustive Description of the Essence of Mentoring (Females)

Beginning high school English teachers perceive the essence of mentoring to be an active process of the mentor listening to, supporting, guiding, and helping the beginning teacher. Mentoring means being available during the mentee's first years to provide emotional support and professional guidance.